

NORTH CAROLINA FOLKLORE

ARTHUR PALMER HUDSON

Editor

CONTENTS

	Page
THE ENCHANTED LAKE, Edward G. McGavran	1
THAT WORD "TAR HEEL" AGAIN, Richard Walser	3
JUGTOWN, Cherry Parker	5
OLD JOE SHUFFLE.	6
AT THE END OF A QUEST, Rebecca Cushman	7
NORTH CAROLINA INTELLIGENCE, O. H. Smith	9
WEATHER LORE IN <u>BLUM'S ALMANAC</u> , Addison Barker	11
THE CRUEL MOTHER	20
ANSONORAMA, Mary Medley	22
THE DECEMBER 1956 MEETING OF THE FOLKLORE SOCIETY	25

A Publication of
 THE NORTH CAROLINA FOLKLORE SOCIETY and
 THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA FOLKLORE COUNCIL

Chapel Hill

LIBRARY OF
 THE WOMAN'S COLLEGE
 UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA
 GREENSBORO, N. C.

NORTH CAROLINA FOLKLORE

Every reader is invited to submit items or manuscripts for publication, preferably of the length of those in this issue. Subscriptions, other business communications, and contributions should be sent to

Editor of North Carolina Folklore

The University of North Carolina

Box 523

Chapel Hill, North Carolina.

Annual subscription, \$2 for adults, \$1 for students (including membership in The North Carolina Folklore Society). Price of this number, \$.50.

THE NORTH CAROLINA FOLKLORE SOCIETY

Betty Vaiden (Mrs. Charles) Williams, Raleigh, President

Donald MacDonald, Charlotte, 1 Vice President

John Fletcher, Edenton, 2 Vice President

Arthur Palmer Hudson, Chapel Hill, Secretary-Treasurer

The North Carolina Folklore Society was organized in 1912, to encourage the collection, study, and publication of North Carolina Folklore. It is affiliated with the American Folklore Society.

THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA FOLKLORE COUNCIL

Arthur Palmer Hudson, Chapel Hill, Chairman

Isaac G. Greer, Chapel Hill, Vice Chairman

Robert W. Linker, Chapel Hill, Secretary

The Folklore Council was organized in September, 1935, to promote the cooperation and coordination of all those interested in folklore, and to encourage the collection and preservation, the study and interpretation, and the active perpetuation and dissemination of all phases of folklore..

THE ENCHANTED LAKE

By Edward G. McGavran, M. D.

[Dr. McGavran is Dean of the School of Public Health of the University of North Carolina. A graduate of Butler University and the Harvard University School of Medicine, he came to Chapel Hill in 1947 after a notable career as a public health administrator, and his leadership of the School of Public Health at Chapel Hill has made it one of the outstanding institutions of its kind in the world. Born at Pachmari, in the Central Provinces of India, to a missionary family that had been sending representatives to the mission field since the middle of the last century, he learned to speak Hindustani and absorbed a great deal of Indian folklore and the traditions of his family. "The Enchanted Lake" is one of the stories contained in a collection of family traditions that he wrote down for his children.]

The location of the mission centers was one of the difficult jobs that father had to take on after the famine of 1897. It meant traveling all over Central Provinces, by bullock cart usually, mile upon mile. Sometimes it was in territories where white men had seldom if ever been before. Usually two or three missionaries would go together while investigating a location.

It was on one of these trips that father found the Enchanted Lake. Central Provinces are dotted with lakes, artificial ones usually, called talaws. These talaws catch the water in the rainy season, and in the dry season they may be used to irrigate the rice fields. Sometimes the talaw is not used for irrigation at all but forms the place of worship for the neighboring village. The temple is built upon its banks. The surface of the temple is covered with intricate carvings. And outside the temple proper are altars and idols before which offerings and sacrifices are laid. Then also steps lead down to the lake, and here the people come and bathe, and get their drinking water, and wash their clothes. Here, also, the animals may come and drink and wash. It is really quite a community center even if not very sanitary. These lakes also have lots of wild ducks upon them, and because it is impossible to buy meat it is necessary to shoot the too-plentiful game.

So it was that in that remote corner of Central Provinces father and two of his fellow missionaries decided to have duck for supper. Coming upon a beautiful talaw, they shot at some ducks which flew up. The ducks fell in the water some fifty yards from shore and, as no good sportsman shoots game without going after it, they decided that someone would have to swim. It was father's turn; so he started to get ready. As he did so, the villagers came over to where they were standing and said: "Sahib, you cannot go into this lake. It is enchanted. There is a great devil that lives in the bottom of this lake, and if any living thing gets into the water the devil grabs him and pulls him under and he never comes up." Father inquired about alligators, snakes, and all other possible sources for such a legend. "No, Sahib; no one has ever seen this devil." But they were sure a devil lived in the bottom of the lake.

Well, father thought he would take a chance. It was probably just a superstition. By this time, quite a crowd had gathered and they begged him not to go. "The British will blame us for your death," they said. Father assured them that they had witnesses who would vouch that he was warned and was going against their wishes. They still implored. "Sahib, it was only a year ago that a man came here upon an elephant. He took the elephant in to drink. Both the elephant and the man were pulled under and never came up." You can't drown

an elephant; so father felt more than ever that this was all a tall tale, and so he told the villagers he would give the devil a chance. He was going to get the ducks.

Father was not a very good swimmer; so he threw a broken piece of plank that lay near at hand into the water and, lying on top of it, paddled out. He had gone less than fifteen yards from the shore when he suddenly found his arms and legs firmly grasped. If he had not been supported by the board he would have gone down without even time to call out. However, as it was, he had time to think and to see what had grasped both arms and legs so firmly. It was a fine-tentacled green weed that grew within six inches of the surface of the water. This weed seemed to contract as it wrapped itself about anything that came near it. So it seemed that the villagers' superstition was not so silly after all and was well grounded upon the facts. However, by staying on the plank he could gradually work his arms and legs free from the mass of weeds, and by keeping his arms and legs at the surface of the water he could prevent getting caught again. Well, he had said he would get the ducks; so he went on out and got them.

On his way back he brought a sample of the weed to show the villagers what was the real cause of people's being drowned in the lake. It didn't do any good. They had seen a miracle with their own eyes. You couldn't kid them. "Weeds! No! It was a great magic." And they were not to be robbed of the wonder.

There is a sequel to this event; but it did not happen until twenty-some years after. Father never more than mentioned the incident to us. I heard the full report on a hunting trip from one of his associates on that adventure. We were not far from where we thought that particular lake was. So we decided to see if we could find it. It wasn't hard because the Enchanted Lake was well known in these parts. The temple was still the center of community life. Some of the idols and altars had sacrifices and offerings before and on them. One altar, with no apparent idol, had an unusual amount of offerings and attention. We asked the priest what god or goddess this altar sacrifice was in honor of. His reply was brief. "That is to a white god who was here twenty years ago and who went into the Enchanted Lake and came out alive."

THAT WORD "TAR HEEL" AGAIN

By Richard Walser

[A native of Lexington, North Carolina, Mr. Walser is a graduate of the University of North Carolina (B. A. and M. A.), and has been for several years a professor of English at North Carolina State College. He has been one of the leaders in the improvement of English instruction in the high schools and colleges of North Carolina. Meanwhile, he has been a popular lecturer and writer on North Carolina literature, history, and folklore. His publications include North Carolina Poetry (1941, rev. 1951), North Carolina in the Short Story (1948), Inglis Fletcher of Bandon Plantation (1952). His latest books are The Enigma of Thomas Wolfe (1953) and North Carolina Drama (1956). Mr. Walser was vice president of the North Carolina Folklore Society in 1956.]

The legends revolving around the origin of the word "Tar Heel" are so numerous that the situation can be categorized only as one of confusion. The two most frequently cited yarns come from explanations in Clark's North Carolina Regiments (1901) and in Creecy's Grandfather's Tales of North Carolina History (1901).

Both versions were written down long after the occurrences of the events on which they were supposedly based. They are similar, too, in that they refer to Civil War times when, presumably, the North Carolina soldiers were so noted for not retreating from advanced positions that they gained a reputation of having tar on their heels, incapacitating their flight in the heat of battle.

These versions do not take into account historical evidence that a North Carolinian was called a "Tar-Burner" as early as 1775, a "Tarboiler" in 1845; that the state was known as "the Turpentine state" in 1850, the "Tar and Turpentine State" in 1856. All these nicknames came, of course, from the state's fame as a source of naval stores. (Reference: my feature article, "How Did We Get To Be Tar Heels?" Raleigh News and Observer, January 24, 1954.)

Even so, the word "Tar Heel" itself seems indeed to have begun in the years of the Civil War. No earlier use of the term has been located. A recent discovery, never before cited as far as I know, pushes back the printed story thirty-five years. In August, 1866, a Charlotte monthly magazine, The Land We Love, published an article titled "The Haversack." In it are several war anecdotes provided by "the gallant Colonel R. of S. C." Here are two unedited paragraphs (p. 293):

The sallies of genuine wit, in repartees between the soldiers of different commands, were an enlivening feature of camp life,

The following occurred December, 1864, when Hoke's division was sent out on a reconnoissance [sic] upon the Darby Town road. Kirkland's N. C. brigade (of as true metal as men are made of) was passing us to take position on our left, and greeted us with "Rice-birds," "Sand-lappers!" "Hagood's foot cavalry!" etc. One of our men cried out, "Go it, tar-heels!" This title the North-Carolina troops were justly proud of, it having been given them at the battle of Manassas, where a general remarked, "That regiment of North-Carolinians must have tar on their heels to make them

stick as they do." To this retort of "Go it, tar-heels!" one of Kirkland's men replied: "Yes, we are tar-heels, and tar sticks"; and "Yes," shouted back another of the South-Carolina rice-birds, "when the fire gets hot, the tar runs."

By the time the variations of this story got to Clark and Creecy, the last clause had been omitted. It seems highly likely that, at first, "Tar Heels" was a term of derision, but that the North Carolina soldiers appropriated it and translated it through usage into words of pride.

The spelling in the foregoing excerpt is odd: a hyphen and no capital letters. Nowadays the three most reliable college dictionaries spell it Tar-heel, with no secondary spelling provided for. But in Tarheelia itself, the custom is for two words, Tar Heel, both capitalized. Of seven leading morning newspapers in North Carolina, only in Durham do we find any concurrence with the lexicographers. The editors in Wilmington, Raleigh, Greensboro, Winston-Salem, Charlotte, and Asheville pay no attention to the dictionary-makers in New York, Massachussetts, and Ohio.

JUGTOWN

By Cherry Parker

"I was born," writes Mrs. Parker, "in southern Kentucky, close to the habitat of the Bell Witch, and I've never lost my interest in the ghost and witch tales which lulled me while I was rocked in a handmade 'Shaker' chair during my early childhood. I am a registered nurse, and will get my degree in Public Health from the University of North Carolina in July. My husband Fred is also in school, and we have two young children, to whom we do not tell ghost stories—at least, not yet. I'm interested in writing; most of my articles have appeared in trade and professional journals and farm and teen-age magazines."

[For parts of her article Mrs. Parker has permission to reprint from her "Let's Go to Jugtown," which appeared in the magazine Upward, May 23, 1954.]

Jugtown, as we know it today, was started in 1917 by Jacques Busbee, an artist from a famous old North Carolina family. In the early days (in fact, dating from the beginnings of English Carolina), most potters had made jugs for distilleries. When prohibition was enacted, much of the North Carolina pottery making stopped. A few old potters kept at their trade, making pickle jars, churns, crocks, and dirt-pie dishes. In fact, you might credit the starting of Jugtown to a dirt pie dish!

Before 1916 Jacques Busbee's chief occupation was portrait painting. Though he longed to contribute something to North Carolina culture as his forebears had, it seemed that most of his portraits were of people out of the state. Around 1916, his wife Juliana R. Busbee was asked to do some flower arrangements at the Lexington County Fair. She asked some women at the fair to bring vases and dishes for her arrangements. An orange dirt-pie dish was brought. When her husband saw it, he knew that because of its color and form, a new field of art lay in that pie dish. He decided that if he could get some descendants of the old potters and give them art training, this would revive an industry that was functional and different. He located at the present site, between Robbins and Seagrove, North Carolina, and his pottery made an immediate hit in New York and New England. Without asking for it, Jugtown began to get publicity in magazines and newspapers, and people started coming to see it. This encouraged potters all over the state of North Carolina.

The Busbees found that people who had settled in this territory were really direct descendants of the earliest settlers of the section. They knew many old hymns and ballads, which Mr. Busbee collected. Ballads were learned from transient peach-orchard workers, and ancient hymns were discovered at arbor meetings. One ballad heard in a peach orchard was about the pre-Revolutionary period - it told of the Seven Years War.

Many folk had classical names like Orpheus, Jason, Cleo, Artemisia, Phryne, and Clyte. Most were craftsmen. They had made beautiful furniture, their own guns, shoes. They were weavers and blacksmiths, and they raised their own food. They lived by the early craftsman's code, "Built Upon Honor." Mr. Busbee took this as his code for making Jugtown pottery.

Jugtown's most famous potter has been Ben Owen, who started turning the kick-wheel there in 1923. A real craftsman, who loves his work, Mr. Owen is the fifth generation of a family of potters, and he has exhibited pottery making both at Columbia University and the University of North Carolina.

Both red and gray clays, found nearby in Moore and Randolph Counties, are used for the pottery making.

Jugtown has attempted to keep the ware-making in the tradition of the settlement. No modern machinery is used. The clay is mixed with water, and the clay mixer is pulled by a mule. The potter turns the kick-wheel with his foot, and the pottery is fired in an old-fashioned kiln, heated with wood.

When you visit Jugtown, when you see the potter in the rustic shop, shaping a jug or a dish as if by magic, you can almost believe you are back in the world of 150 years ago when the ware was loaded on covered wagons to be peddled or bartered for goods not to be found locally; it is easy to imagine you might be living in a time when jug headstones were used in the local burying-grounds, and earthen churns and clay medicine jars were the order of the day.

At least that's how it affects me.

Jugtown makes me want to go back into time and meet someone called Orpheus, who has a sister named Phryne, who will sing me a ballad about the Seven Years War - while I sit in front of an open fire and eat cobbler out of a dirt-pie dish!

OLD JOE SHUFFLE

[From an old MS. copy given the Editor by Mrs. Juliana Busbee of Jugtown in 1956. According to Mrs. Busbee, "Old Joe Shuffle" was Josiah Wedgwood Sheffield, one of the potters of the neighborhood. She did not know who composed this crude ballad about him. She remembered only that she and her husband, Jacques Busbee, heard the ballad and got a copy of it.]

Old Joe Shuffle he walked with a limp,
Old man Shuffle he walked with a stick.
Old man Shuffle he didn't walk much,
For he limped, and he kicked at a wheel.

Old Joe Shuffle he kicked a kick-wheel,
Old man Shuffle turned pots on a wheel.
Old man Shuffle he kicked out a jug
And drank from it all he could hold,

Old man Shuffle he loved his corn likker,
Old man Shuffle he made his corn likker.
Old man Shuffle he sold his corn likker.
He slept right smart in the Moore County jail.

Old Joe Shuffle he died at the wheel,
Old Joe Shuffle warn't turning a jug.
He didn't die turning a jug.
He thought he saw snakes, but they warn't nothing but drakes.

Old Joe Shuffle he died at the wheel,
Old Joe Shuffle warn't turning a jug.
He struck at the snakes and killed his own drakes,
And his heart stopped beating right there.

AT THE END OF A QUEST

By Rebecca Cushman

[The author of "Gus and Gladys," in the July 1956 number of North Carolina Folklore, Miss Cushman was sketched there. Spending part of her time in Hillsboro and part in Asheville, she has been working on a book of which "At the End of a Quest" is a sample.]

One afternoon, back in the years before the Santeetla Dam had engulfed some of the modest beauty spots hidden in the Great Smokies, I was sitting in a home-made chair in the small general store of a tiny mountain settlement forty miles from a railroad.

The store stood close by the side of a broad, clear, swift-running creek. It was the most beautiful creek I have ever seen - secure then, and joyous between its banks of tall, dense, deep-green rhododendron. We of the small group chatting in the store had been hearing snatches of some kind of a tale that was being told out on the porch. And, catching also glimpses of the countenance of the teller of this distant yarn, I said to a neighbor standing by - for I felt sure he knew everybody in the country-side - "That man is a teller of tall tales. I know it by the expression on his face."

My friend said that I was indeed right, and that he would bring him in to our cracker-barrel session which had been going on beside the counter. The man acknowledged the introduction with dignity, but his face at once became impassive; a sort of long, know-nothing-whatever expression that I was afraid we could not penetrate. I saw he was on his guard, but I made a try.

"Don't you know some good stories you could tell us?"

"No ma'm," he said with the utmost solemnity; "I can't think of any."

"But you might let us in on that one I just heard you telling out on the porch!"

"Oh," he said, "I was tellin' 'em about a feller from one of the public work camps that was comin' to see a girl that was livin' at my house. We was a-teasin' her a little, an' one of the boys that was there chimed in and says, yes, he was a fine feller. He said he knowed him well. Said he's been on the chain gang with him fur four months when the feller was up fur slappin' his wife with a hand-saw."

The ice was cracked, at least! And then he said: "But I do know a man in Graham County that can tell some good tales. He said one time they was a lot of blackbirds that got in his corn field. They settled in a gully. He says he got his gun, an' shot down that gully, an' he killed nine hundred an' ninety-nine. Then somebody says to him, 'Well, why don't you make it a thousand while you're a-tellin' it!' But the man says, 'Law! You knowed I wouldn't tell a lie fur jest one little blackbird!'"

The next week I went over the line into Graham County. The rain was coming down in torrents, and the mud grew deeper and more splashy as we eased the car through a shallow creek, and then slowly along over the unpaved road with its many deep ruts.

At last we came to our destination. I got out of the car, went over to the little picket gate, and lifted the latch. The path inside led to a two-story house, somewhat run-down to be sure; but it was a home that could easily have been in a town instead of in practically a wilderness. And this, in a remote and sparsely settled mountain county of great distances, was the kind of surprise not often found.

Standing and sitting on the floor of the rather large porch was a collection of small children who seemed overcome with shyness at my approach. I addressed myself to a seven-year-old who was sitting flat, legs out, and spine pressed firmly against the frame of the front door. He was a very elf of a child with large blue-gray eyes, sweeping black lashes, clear-cut features, and that something additional which marks such men-children as leaders. This was evident even before we talked. The very shape of his head, with its mop of wavy brown hair and its proud bearing, bespoke strength.

"Does Mr. McGill live here?" I asked.

"Yes." said the boy.

"Is he your granddaddy?"

"Yes."

"Is he at home?"

"No." said the child. He was dealing out the information with a conscious reserve.

"Do you know where he is?"

"No." And then something began to loosen his tongue. "He went off this mornin', an' he didn't say whur he was a-goin'. Ef he got snake-bit we wouldn't know whur to look fur him!" Anxiety for Granddaddy had won!

It was a vivid little soul who sat so firmly before me that day. I came away feeling much the poorer for not having had the chance to know him better; as well as not having had the opportunity to meet his grandgather at all. Yet it was all so typical of this thing we call the mountain picture. It is illusive, for in the midst of poverty it is rich in the things that cannot be bought with money. You go looking for a tall tale and you come back remembering a little boy clad in faded overalls; a little boy who looks like a child prince in a fairy story. And you keep wondering what that priceless hidden gift, so apparent in face and bearing, will bring forth for the future - poet or statesman?

Yes, it is hard to separate the folk tale from the larger mountain picture, for it is all a part of the spontaneous vitality, the charm, the promise, that spring from the deep and varied roots of its yesterdays.

NORTH CAROLINA INTELLIGENCE

O. H. Smith

[The following is from Early Indiana Trials and Sketches, Reminiscences of Hon. O. H. Smith, Cincinnati: Moore, Wilstach, Keys & Co., Printers, 1958, p. 105. It was contributed by Mr. Glenn Tucker, a former newspaper correspondent and advertising man, who lives at Flat Rock, North Carolina, where he grows apples, and between spraying, pruning, and picking, reads and writes history. Mr. Tucker's Tecumseh: Vision of Glory won, in 1956, the Thomas Wolfe Memorial Award and the Mayflower Cup. It was while he was doing research for his Poltroons and Patriots, a two-volume history of the War of 1812, that he discovered "North Carolina Intelligence." A native of Indiana and a graduate of DePauw University and Columbia University, after extensive newspaper work Mr. Tucker moved to North Carolina, and has been an active member of the North Carolina Literary and Historical Association and the Western North Carolina Historical Association.]

There arose a personal debate during the session, between Judge Dorsey, of Maryland, and Samuel P. Carson, of North Carolina, which became highly interesting to the House, as it was carried on with the utmost good humor on both sides. It is evident, however, that Judge Dorsey had decidedly the advantage of his North Carolina competitor. The debate ultimately turned upon the comparative intelligence of the constituents of these gentlemen. Mr. Carson had charged the people of the eastern shore of Maryland with ignorance of the history of the country, owing to their inability to read or write, and closed with a most ludicrous account of the subserviency of the Marylanders to the supposed great men of the country. The good humor of the House seemed to be on the side of North Carolina, when Judge Dorsey rose to reply, his face covered with fun. John Leeds Kerr, afterwards United States Senator, whispered in my ear, "Dorsey can say funny things." I give a sketch of his speech from recollection.

"The gentleman says my constituents are ignorant and illiterate; I will not retort upon those who sent him here, but relate a few facts and leave the House to judge between us. Dates are important. The late war was declared in 1812, and the British army ingloriously burned the capitol in 1814, to the lasting disgrace of that nation. The whole story was immediately published in the National Intelligencer, and copied into every paper in the United States. The war was over and peace restored by the treaty of Ghent.

"Just ten years after the burning of the Capitol, my business took me into the gentleman's district. I was approaching the principal town, when I heard the sound of a fife and drum emerging from a yellow-pine woods near the town, where they were making tar and turpentine. I saw before me the waving plume and marching, with quick step, of a regiment of men, the stars and stripes borne aloft, with the motto 'North Carolina now and forever,' in large letters. I rode directly to the principal hotel, kept by a landlord that evidently lived well, and knew how to entertain his guests if he was pleased with their standing.

"The moment I was seated on the porch he addressed me. 'Have you heard the news?' 'What news?' 'Why, the British have burned the Capitol and our army is moving forward as you see to meet the enemy.' 'When did you get the news?' 'We got it last

night about seven o'clock. That you may understand how this happened--just before the last war we held a great public meeting to give information to the people. It was found that there was but one man in the county that could read. He was elected county reader. We had no newspaper. We then voted to take the National Intelligencer, and that every Saturday afternoon the paper should be publicly read, beginning at the first page and reading it regularly through, advertisements and all; since then our reader has kept constantly at it every Saturday afternoon. Last night he read the burning of the Capitol by the British. We at once flew to arms. The old Revolutionary spirit is completely aroused.'

"Dinner was announced and I took my seat at the head of the table, when out sprang my landlord and in a moment announced that the President of the United States was approaching in a coach and four with out-riders, and sure enough up drove the coach with four splendid grays, and out-riders in full livery. The distinguished personage stepped from the coach, and was bowed into the parlor by my landlord, hat in hand. Curiosity led me to place one ear at the opening. The landlord bowing to the floor--'The President of the United States, I presume.' 'Not exactly.' 'The Secretary of State?' 'Not exactly.' 'The Secretary of War?' 'Not exactly.' 'The Secretary of the Navy?' 'Not exactly.' 'The Governor of North Carolina?' 'Not exactly.' 'Joseph Gales, the editor of the National Intelligencer?' 'Not exactly.' Then raising his voice and stamping his foot angrily on the floor, 'Who in the thunder are you?' 'I am a merchant tailor from Washington City, and have come here to collect some bills.' 'You can pass on, I have no room for you.'"

The judge closed amid thunders of applause; his triumph was complete. Mr. Carson laughed heartily, and the matter ended in the best of personal feelings.

WEATHER LORE IN BLUM'S ALMANAC, 1844-1950

By Addison Barker

[Having grown up in Thomasville, N. C., Mr. Barker served for over four years in the Medical Department of the U. S. Army. After his discharge from the service, he entered High Point College, where he obtained his B. A. degree in English and social sciences in 1949. In 1950 he received the M. A. degree in English at the University of North Carolina.

[Since 1950 Mr. Barker has taught English and worked as a journalist. His collection of original poems, The Magpie's Nest, was published by the Wings Press, Mill Valley, California, in 1950. At present he is a member of the English Department of the Alabama Polytechnic Institute.]

Blum's Farmer's and Planter's Almanac, founded in 1828 by John Christian Blum, an editor and publisher of Salem, N. C., has been published annually without interruption since that date. Not even the Civil War years forced suspension of publication, although the Almanac numbers produced in this period were slender in volume.

From the beginning, the editors relied heavily upon reader contributions for the bulk of the folklore items appearing in each issue. Some material was gleaned from other almanacs and farm journals. The present publisher, J. E. Goslen, has informed the writer in a personal interview that he relies almost entirely on reader contributions.

Figures on the early circulation of the Almanac are unavailable. In 1925, approximately 80,000 copies per year were circulated, and today the circulation ranges from 215,000 to 225,000 copies per year. Owing to this large reading public and to the great number of folklore items in each issue, the Almanac stands as a significant organ for the perpetuation and transmission of North Carolina folklore.

In 1950, the writer had the privilege and good fortune to collect and classify the folklore in the Almanac for the years 1844-1950 under the wise and sympathetic direction of Dr. Arthur Palmer Hudson, of the University of North Carolina. This project was undertaken in completion of the thesis requirement for the M. A. degree in English.

The weather signs entered below form a part of the thesis. Each sign is followed by the year of publication and the number of the page on which it may be found in the Almanac. (Copies of the Almanac for the periods 1848-1914, 1916-1929, and 1934-1942 are in the Weeks Collection of Caroliniana in the North Carolina Room of the University of North Carolina Library. The writer filled the gaps between 1944 and 1950 by borrowing copies from friends and relatives.) The signs listed here are not in chronological order.

If the ants' hole is not surrounded by a cone, the weather will be fair. 1949; 13.

If the ants' hole is surrounded by a cone, there will soon be rain. 1949; 13.

Unusual clearness of the atmosphere and unusual brightness or twinkling of the stars indicate rain. 1922; 90.

- The aurora borealis always indicates a change of weather. 1883; 34.
- When bears come out of the swamps to look for places to sleep,
there will be a hard winter. (American Indian) 1938; 57.
- An unusually large crop of berries means a hard winter. 1938; 57.
- If, after it has rained for some time, you see enough blue in the
west to make a Dutchman a pair of breeches, it will soon
clear off. 1883; 34.
- A cat usually washes its face before a rainstorm. 1923; 13.
- A green Christmas is followed by a white Easter. 1948; 56.
- A warm Christmas means a cold Easter. 1948; 56.
- If meadows are green at Christmas, they will be covered with
frost at Easter. 1948; 56.
- Clouds that look like large rocks portend great showers. 1844; 3.
- Hard-edged, oily-looking clouds bring wind. 1890; 44.
- If clouds arise with great white tops and black lower sides,
make haste for shelter. 1844; 3.
- If large clouds decrease during summer or harvest time, there
will be fair weather. 1844; 3.
- Small clouds marked with dapple gray and blown by a north wind
bring fair weather for two or three days. 1844; 3.
- Small, inky-looking clouds bring rain. 1890; 44.
- Soft-looking clouds mean fair weather. 1890; 44.
- The higher the clouds, the finer the weather. 1923; 67.
- When clouds are rough and ragged, expect wind. 1923; 67.
- When clouds have a soft and delicate appearance, look for fair
weather. 1923; 67.
- Light scud clouds, wind and rain. 1890; 44.
- If the peel and husks of corn are unusually heavy, there will be
a hard winter. 1938; 57.
- When your corns give you an extra pain, it is going to rain.
1942; 23.
- A corona growing larger about the sun or moon indicates fair
weather. 1922; 90.
- A corona growing smaller about the sun or moon indicates rain.
1922; 90.

Cows lie down before a rainstorm. 1923; 13.

When the crows caw loudly and long, it is going to rain. 1942; 23.

If the last eighteen days of February and the first ten days of March are rainy, spring and summer are likely to be so. 1844; 3.

Dew is an indication of fine weather. 1923; 67.

Dews which lie long in the morning signify fair weather. 1844; 3.

Small dews which vanish rapidly signify rain. 1844; 3.

The first three days of the dog days rule the others; if they are rainy, the others will be rainy; if they are dry, the others will be dry. 1883; 34.

Dogs bury bones before a rainstorm. 1923; 13.

Drought usually comes in on an east wind. 1938; 82.

If the wind turns out of the south to the northeast and turns neither south nor rainy the third day, it is likely to produce a great drought, especially if there has been much rain out of the south before. 1844; 3.

If the earth or other moist places emit an extraordinary stink or smell, rain is coming. 1844; 3.

The very early migration of eels to the sea foretells a hard winter. 1938; 57.

When fish jump from the water, it is going to rain. 1942; 23.

When flies stick tight and bite, it is going to rain. 1942; 23.

When the fog settles on the mountain in the morning, it will certainly rain before night. 1883; 34.

Fogs indicate settled weather. A morning fog usually breaks away before noon. 1922; 90.

If October and November are frosty, January and February are likely to be open and mild. 1844; 3.

Moonlight nights have the heaviest frost. 1923; 67.

The first frost and the last frost are usually preceded by a temperature very much above the mean. 1922; 90.

When the geese fly south unusually early, there will be a hard winter. (American Indian) 1938; 57.

The ground hog, or badger, takes a peep out of his hole on February 2 and gives the weather a "once over." If he sees sun, he beats it back and takes another snooze for six weeks.

But if he sees cloudy weather, he ventures abroad and begins his year of activity. 1925; 41.

A halo around the sun indicates rain or snow. 1883; 34.

A halo around the moon indicates a coming storm; the number of stars within the circle shows the number of days before it will occur. 1883; 34.

A halo occurring about the sun or moon after fine weather indicates a storm. 1922; 90.

Hogs grunt before a rainstorm. 1923; 13.

If hornets build their nests high off the ground, there will be a great deal of snow during the winter. 1938; 57.

Horses fidget and neigh before a rainstorm. 1923; 13.

If ice will bear a man before Christmas, it will not bear a mouse after Christmas. 1948; 56.

A general mist before sunrise and near the full of the moon brings fair weather. 1844; 3.

A general mist which rises in the new moon brings rain in the end. 1844; 3.

If a general mist rises before sunup, in the old moon, there will be rain in the new moon. 1844; 3.

If a mist rises in low grounds and soon vanishes, expect fair weather. 1844; 3.

If morning mist rises high, or to the top of hills, you may expect rain in a day or two. 1844; 3.

One Saturday change of the moon is enough for seven years, as there is always a severe storm after it. 1883; 34.

Sharp horns on the moon portend windy weather. 1923; 67.

The nearer the time of the moon's change to midnight, the fairer will the weather be during the seven days following. 1883; 34.

The nearer to midday the phases of the moon happen, the more foul or wet the weather that may be expected for the next seven days. 1883; 34.

When muskrats build their mounds on higher ground than usual there will be a hard winter. 1938; 57.

A northwester begins by blowing hard and usually brings clear weather. 1844; 3.

If the latter end of October and the beginning of November are for

the most part warm and rainy, January and February are likely to be cold and frosty, except after a very warm summer. 1844; 3.

If the leaves of the paternoster pea plant droop vertically, expect a storm. 1938; 57.

When the leaves of the paternoster pea plant incline downward, cloudy weather is approaching. 1938; 57.

When the leaves of the paternoster pea plant incline upward, fair weather is coming. 1938; 57.

When the leaves of the paternoster pea plant stand vertically, the sky will be clear and cloudless. 1938; 57.

When the first peewee sings in the spring, winter is broken. 1935; 117.

If pigeons, wild ducks, and wild geese come early, they come away from a hard winter. 1844; 3.

If rain begins about five o'clock p.m., it will rain through the night. 1883; 34.

If rain begins about noon, it will continue through the afternoon. 1883; 34.

If rain begins an hour or two after sunrise, it is likely to rain all day, unless there is a rainbow before it begins to rain. 1844; 3.

If rain clears off in the night, it will rain next day. 1883; 34.

If rain commences before daylight, it will hold up before eight o'clock a.m. 1883; 34.

If rain commences after nine o'clock p.m., it will rain the next day. 1883; 34.

The farther the sight, the nearer the rain. 1923; 67.

When the air grows thick by degrees and the sun, moon, and stars shine dimmer and dimmer, it is likely to rain for some hours. 1844; 3.

An evening rainbow is regarded as a sign of fair weather. 1922; 90.

If the colors of the rainbow tend more to red than to any other color, wind follows. 1844; 3.

If the colors of the rainbow tend toward green and blue, rain will follow. 1844; 3.

When there is a rainbow at night, it will not rain the next day. 1883; 34.

When there is a rainbow before noon, it is going to rain. 1922; 90.
1942; 23.

Sudden rains do not last long. 1844; 3.

A ring around the moon signifies rain. 1942; 23.

If a river rises more than usual after a rain, dry weather will follow. 1844; 3.

The sinking of rivers more than usual in some seasons is a certain presage of much rain to follow. 1844; 3.

When salt will not come from the shaker, it is going to rain. 1942; 23.

When a flock of sheep are found in a corner with their backs turned to the northwest, wait long enough and you will feel a wind blow up from that direction. 1923; 13.

A bright yellow sky at sunset presages wind. 1890; 44.

A dark, gloomy-looking blue sky brings wind. 1890; 44.

A deep blue sky, even when seen through clouds, indicates fair weather. 1922; 90.

A gray sky indicates fine weather. 1890; 44.

After it has been raining for some time, a blue sky in the southeast indicates that there will be fair weather soon. 1883; 34.

A green or yellowish-green sky indicates rain. 1922; 90.

A greenish sky brings wind and rain. 1890; 44.

A light, bright-blue sky means fine weather. 1890; 44.

An Indian-red sky at sunset indicates rain. 1890; 44.

A pale yellow sky at sunset presages wet weather. 1890; 44.

A "rain sky" usually forms and spreads from the west. 1938; 82.

A red glow from the west at sunset, evenly diffused over the upper sky or in long narrow streaks after the setting sun, always portends fine weather. 1938; 82.

A rosy sky at sunset portends fine weather. 1890; 44.

If a red eastern sky is flecked with low, puffy, brightly-tinted clouds at dawn, rain and heavy gales will follow. 1938; 82.

If in the morning some parts of the sky appear green between the clouds and the sky above is blue, stormy weather is not far off. 1844; 3.

If the sky is red in the morning, look out for a storm. 1883; 34.
1890; 44. 1942; 23.

- If the sky is very red in the west in the evening, the weather will be fair next day. 1883; 34.
- If the western sky gradually becomes clouded over with an unbroken film of gray, rain is not far distant. 1938; 82.
- When smoke beats down from the chimney, a storm is near. 1883; 34.
- When smoke from the chimney hangs near the ground, expect strong wind and stormy weather. 1923; 67.
- When smoke goes straight up from the chimney, expect a period of fair weather. 1883; 34.
- Snow on the ground at Christmas, grass on the ground at Easter. 1935; 117.
- When the snow-partridge has turned white by the middle of September-- a change not usually seen until well into October--there will be a hard winter. 1938; 57.
- If the sounds of bells, steam whistles, water, and beasts are heard more plainly than usual on a windless day, rain will follow. 1844; 3. 1833; 34.
- When sound travels far at night, rain is near. 1942; 23.
- When the stars are ghostly dim, it will rain soon. 1941; 23.
- When stars flicker in a dark background, rain or snow soon follows. 1923; 67.
- When a storm is advancing, the wind blows to meet it. 1890; 43.
- The most serious storms come out of the south on a southeasterly or southwesterly wind. 1938; 82.
- A cool and moist summer generally portends a hard winter. 1844; 3.
- A hot and dry summer and autumn portend an open beginning of winter followed by a cold ending and a cold beginning of spring. 1844; 3.
- If the sun rises clear and soon goes into a cloud, it will rain before night. 1883; 34.
- If the sun rises in clouds, and the clouds soon decrease, fair weather is certain to follow. 1844; 3.
- If the sun rises red and fiery, expect wind and rain. 1844; 3.
- If the sun sets clear on Friday night, it will rain before Monday night. 1883; 34.
- If the sun shines while it rains, it will rain the next day. 1883; 34.

- A sun dog, or mock sun, indicates that there will be stormy weather soon. 1883; 34.
- If the first Sunday in a month is stormy, all the other Sundays in that month will be stormy. 1883; 34.
- If the first Sunday in a month is stormy, two other Sundays in that month will be stormy. 1883; 34.
- A red sunrise, with clouds lowering later in the morning, indicates rain. 1922; 90.
- If it begins to rain an hour or two before sunrise, it is likely to be fair before noon. 1844; 3.
- A gray, lowering sunset indicates rain. 1922; 90.
- When swallows come early, a hot summer follows. 1844; 3.
- Thunder and lightning during Christmas week signify much snow for the remainder of the winter. 1948; 56.
- A tree-frog is placed in a glass jar half full of water. A small step ladder is placed in the jar to enable the frog to climb above the water. If the frog fails to ascend the ladder or squats on one of the lower steps, bad weather is coming. If he emerges from the water and sits on the top step, the prospect is for clear weather. The higher the step he occupies, the finer the weather will be. 1938; 57.
- Three days cold bring three days colder. 1883; 34.
- A growing whiteness means an approaching storm. 1922; 90.
- A wind blowing from the east or southeast indicates the approach of a storm from the west. 1890; 43.
- If the north wind blows for three days, the south wind will not rise till after the east wind has blown a while. 1844; 3.
- If the south wind begins to blow for two or three days, the north wind will blow immediately after it. 1844; 3.
- If the wind is from the northwest or southeast, the storm will be short; if from the northeast, it will be a hard one; if from the northwest, it will be a cold one. 1883; 34.
- If the wind moves in a direction contrary to that of the sun--from east to north, from north to west--it generally returns to a former point, at least before it has gone quite round the circle. 1844; 3.
- When the wind blows from the northeast for two or three days without any rain, and does not come south the third day, it is likely to continue from the northeast for eight or nine fair days, and then come south again. 1844; 3.

When the wind changes with the sun--from east to south, from south to west--it seldom goes back. 1844; 3.

When the wind continues to vary as if it were trying to find a point to settle in, and afterwards begins to blow constantly, it continues for some days. 1844; 3.

Whichever wind begins to blow in the morning will last longer than that which begins in the evening. 1844; 3.

Wind blowing from the sea is always cool in summer and warm in winter. 1844; 3.

Much wind, perhaps rain. 1890; 44.

The wind returns to the north from the south with a strong wind and rain. 1844; 3.

The wind usually turns from north to south without rain. 1844; 3.

Wind changing from east to southeast brings rain. 1938; 45.

Wind changing from north to west signifies clear and dry weather. 1938; 45.

Wind changing from south to northeast brings rain or snow. 1938; 45.

Wind changing from south to northwest signifies that it will be clear and colder. 1938; 45.

Wind changing from southeast to east brings rainstorms to the south. 1938; 45.

Wind from the east brings stormy weather. 1938; 45.

Wind from the north signifies a falling temperature. 1938; 45.

Wind from the south indicates a rising temperature. 1938; 45.

Wind from the southeast brings rain. 1938; 45.

Wind from the west signifies fair weather. 1938; 45.

The strongest winds come when the wind turns from south to northwest. 1844; 3.

Winds from the south bring mild weather and heat waves in the summer months. 1938; 82.

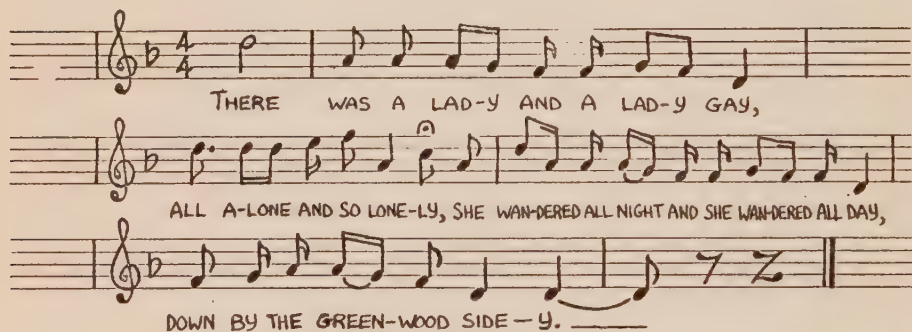
In winter an easterly wind current heralds the influx of severe weather. 1938; 82.

THE CRUEL MOTHER

[From a tape recording of the ballad as sung by Mr. William Stephenson, of Newport News, Virginia, for the Editor in June 1956. Mr. Stephenson, now a newspaper man, said that he grew up in North Carolina and that he learned the ballad in the western part of the state. Transcription by Mr. Herbert Shellans, of Chapel Hill.

[Known to the singer as "Lady Gay," the ballad is a version of "The Cruel Mother" (Child, No. 20). "The Cruel Mother" is not represented in The Frank C. Brown Collection. It has, however, been recovered from oral tradition in America by several folksong collectors. Good texts, with music, are to be found in Arthur Kyle Davis (ed.), Traditional Ballads of Virginia (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1929), pp. 133-136, 560-561; and in Cecil J. Sharp, English Folk Songs from the Southern Appalachians, 2 vols., edited by Maud Karpeles (London: Oxford University Press, 1932, 1952), I, pp. 56-62. Five of Sharp's thirteen texts of the ballad are from North Carolina.

[Child summarizes the story of the full ballad as follows: "A young woman, who passes for a leal maiden, gives birth to two babes, puts them to death with a penknife, and buries them, or ties them hand and feet and buries them alive. She afterwards sees two pretty boys, and exclaims if they were hers she would treat them most tenderly. They make answer that when they were hers they were treated differently, rehearse what she had done, and inform or threaten her that hell shall be her portion." Most American texts shorten this story considerably. From a comparison with Child's summary, it will be seen that Mr. Stephenson's version covers most of the salient narrative features. It is fuller than most of the Virginia versions, though not so full as Sharp's H, from Marion, North Carolina.]



1. There was a lady and a lady gay,
All alone and so lonely.
She walked all night and she walked all day
Down by the greenwood sidey.
2. As she was going over the bridge,
She felt herself a-growing big.

3. She leaned her back all against an oak,
And there those two fine babes were born.
4. She took a knife both long and sharp
And pierced them to their little hearts.
5. Oh, babes, oh, babes, if you were mine,
I'd dress you up in clothes so fine.
6. Oh, mother, oh, mother, when we were thine,
You neither dressed us coarse nor fine.
7. In seven years you'll hear a bell,
All alone and so lonely.
That bell will ring you down to hell
Down by the greenwood sidey.

ANSONORAMA

By Mary Medley

[When shown Miss Hermine Caraway's "Anson Anecdotes," in the July 1955 number of North Carolina Folklore, Miss Mary Medley, also of Wadesboro, Anson County, was reminded of other Anson anecdotes. Some of these she has written down for the present number of this journal.

[Born on a plantation in Anson County which has been in the possession of her family for a century, Miss Medley was educated at Weaver (now Brevard) College, Wesleyan College (Macon, Georgia), and the University of North Carolina. She has taught school in Virginia and North Carolina and has done extensive work on various North Carolina newspapers, besides writing historical pageants, articles for county history, and radio programs. In 1952 she published Dogwood Winter, a volume of verse.]

Buck Newton

Buck Newton was a colorful character well known around Wadesboro forty or more years ago. He was seen frequently walking the streets, or the roads in the area between Lilesville and Wadesboro, where he made his home.

The dull-witted fellow went barefoot with pants legs rolled up to his knees. He sported a floppy hat and an ill-fitting shirt, and always carried a large club or stick, which he would often shake at a passerby, with some muttered word or epithet. In his jaw rolled a wad of tobacco, and at times he flaunted a cigar from one corner of his mouth. A large red bandanna handkerchief, nearly always dirty swung from his belt.

Buck was a champion loafer, spending much of his time fooling around with cotton buyers, farmers, politician, and lawyers, as they gathered in Wadesboro for business. If he ever got in a hurry to go somewhere, he would hit his legs with a switch and say, "Get up, Buck, and go along!"

Of the many humorous tales told on Buck, one of the best was about his flagging the through, limited passenger train while it was near Wadesboro on its Birmingham-Washington run. The incident probably occurred between Wadesboro and Lilesville, for Buck frequently walked this stretch of track.

Buck honed for a fresh chew of tobacco as the alcoholic thirsts for strong drink.

As he saw the fast train approaching down the gleaming rails, Buck hit upon an idea. Taking his red bandanna handkerchief from his belt and tying it to his stick, he began flagging the train and making frantic hand signals.

The engineer saw flag and signal, reduced speed, and came to a dead stop. Buck sauntered over to the train as the conductor stepped down from platform with visions of danger ahead.

When the unkempt, odd-looking character approached the train, the conductor asked, "What's the matter, buddy?"

"Say, mister," said Buck, with a squint in his eye, "have you got a chaw of tobacker on you?"

By this time the engineer strode up. "What's going on here?" he asked.

"This dam' fool jest wants a chaw of tobacker."

"Have you got one?" Buck asked the engineer.

"Naw!" exploded the engineer.

"Well, what in hell did you stop the train for?"

Mr. C. and the Widow

Mr. C. was known in his Anson County community as a wicked man, but he was of good family. His sharp tongue, profane words, and temper in a fight marked him as someone apart from his more conservative and conventional neighbors.

On a neighboring farm lived a poor, lonely widow, in a little shack. The winter was cutting deep with cold and snow. Wood was her only fuel, and hard to get at that time of year.

Mr. C., knowing about the widow's situation, had a sudden urge to do a kind deed. He loaded a wagon full of wood and drove over to the old lady's house late one afternoon, as the wind was rising and the fire needed an extra stick or two.

Mr. C. went to the door and knocked. The little old woman, with shawl-draped shoulders, came to the door and peeped out. She recognized Mr. C., saw the load of wood, and sensed the kind act intended.

A smile wreathed her face, and throwing up her hands for joy, she exclaimed, "Well, the Lord sent it, even if the Devil did bring it."

"He'll Wait"

One cold winter day a sawmill crew in eastern Anson was transporting a corpse on a railroad handcar to the place of burial. They had already been nipping the bottle, and as they proceeded on their cold ride they continued to do so.

After they had pumped and plied their way for a few miles, someone less numbed and muddled than the rest discovered that they had lost the body. They stopped and went into a huddle to decide what to do. A bright thinker came up with a plan.

"Let's jes' go back and git him where we left him. He'll wait."

The Laziest Man

He was the laziest man in the country. They said he was so lazy that he wouldn't feed his family. Some of the neighbors got so disgusted that they decided to pull a trick on him. One day they drove up to his house with wagon and team, seized him, and bound him in the vehicle. They told him that if he didn't

promise to go to work they would bury him alive.

The wagon moved out of the yard and headed for a cemetery nearby. Neighbors along the way decided that the joke had gone too far, and rushed out saying that they would give the man a bushel of corn or two if his captors would only not bury him alive.

The captive, hearing this charitable offer, rose up from the floor of the wagon and asked, "Is it shelled?" The neighbors shook their heads. "Well, drive on, boys," said Lazybones.

"But I Ain't"

During the days of the depression, when welfare handouts were part of the regular order, a colored woman appeared before the welfare superintendent of Anson County seeking help. She was in conference with an interviewer. Yes, she was the mother of six children. The oldest was seven, and she was having a hard time trying to feed and clothe them. Yes, her husband had been dead nine years.

The interviewer turned on her with puzzled look. "You say you have six children, the oldest is only seven, and your husband's been dead nine years. How can you figure that out?"

"Yas, suh. You see, he's dead. But I ain't."

Unsanitary

A Wadesboro lady had a maid who enjoyed sessions of the mayor's court, which at that time was held on Saturday nights. She would come back to work on Monday with choice bits of information for her employer which sparked up the cleaning jobs during the day.

The maid's enthusiasm for court was keen for some time; then it waned. The lady of the house noticed that change. One day she asked the maid, "Don't you still sit in on court Saturday nights?"

"No'm; I quit. They just started asking too many unsanitary questions."

Putting One Over

A half-witted fellow did errands around a Wadesboro wholesale grocery establishment. One day he was sent to the post office with a batch of letters and money for stamps. After an absence of several minutes, he returned with the money in his hand but without the letters.

"Lyman, why have you brought back the stamp money?"

"Well, I just stuck 'em in when nobody was lookin'."

THE DECEMBER 1956 MEETING OF THE FOLKLORE SOCIETY

The program for the forty-fifth annual meeting of the Folklore Society in Raleigh on December 2, 1956, was carried out with great success. The Manteo Room of the Sir Walter Hotel was taxed to capacity by an appreciative audience, and many who attended commented that the program was the most interesting and varied in many years. Since the program was described in some detail in the December number of North Carolina Folklore, it will suffice to record the features by title.

1. "Filipino Dances and Folksongs" by Sra. Rose Lily Soller and Dr. Eduardo Ortiz, of the Philippine Islands, in native costumes.
2. "A Sheaf of British and American Folksongs" by Herbert Shellans, of Chapel Hill, with guitar accompaniment.
3. "Scottish Jacobite Songs" by Donald MacDonald, of Charlotte, in Highland costume.
4. "Tarheel Talk" by Norman Eliason, of Chapel Hill.

The following officers were elected for 1957: President, Betty Vaiden (Mrs. Charles) Williams, Raleigh; 1 Vice President, Donald MacDonald, Charlotte; 2 Vice President, John Fletcher, Edenton; Secretary-Treasurer, Arthur Palmer Hudson, Chapel Hill.

